

DRESSING CHILDREN FOR COLD WEATHER



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DRESSING CHILDREN FOR COLD WEATHER

Choose outdoor clothing according to the temperature and the wind. Winter weather may be wet cold, dry cold, or extremely strong cold. Watch the thermometer and listen to the weather reports. It is almost as bad to wear too much clothing as too little clothing. Children are very active and overheat readily when dressed too warmly. Sudden chilling of an overheated body may cause colds, chapped skin, sore throat, chilblains or even frostbite.



FOR WET COLD--

Normal lightweight underwear, pant-type trousers, cotton chirt, cotton stockings and leather shoes inside rubber boots is usually enough clothing. Add a warm, water repellent coat, lightweight cap and warm mittens to keep the child warm and dry.

FOR DRY COLD--

Which is anywhere from 10 above to 20 degrees below zero, add more clothing, such as wool socks over cotton socks, snowpants over jeans, heavier mittens and warmer cap.

Footwear may be fur-lined, synthetic fleece-lined, or wool-lined boots, or mukluks, and should be removed in the house. Lightweight shoes inside the boot provides an indoor shoe. Feet should not perspire nor the socks get wet. Frosted feet easily develop in extreme cold with perspiration soaked socks.



FOR STRONG COLD--

Twenty degrees below zero and colder, the same basic garments can be worn close to the body. Add lightweight long underwear for longer periods in the cold. Jeans are not good in extreme cold. They fit tightly and do not hold enough warm air. Corduroy trousers or other warm fabrics are preferred. Snow-pants, sweater and a parka are needed. Mittens should be used instead of gloves, for they hold the fingers together and make for greater warmth. In strong cold, a parka is preferred to a jacket or coat. Also add a scarf, a yard or more long, inside the cap or hood to cover the nose and lower part of the face to warm the air before it reaches the lungs. A knit cap should be worn under the parka hood.

Keep It Clean. Clothing must be kept clean. Dirt clogs the air spaces in clothing and reduces the insulation.

Avoid Overheating. Do not overheat to the extent of perspiration. Always remember that perspiration invites freezing.

Wear It Loose In Layers. Several layers of medium weight clothing holds more still air and keeps the body warmer than one heavy garment of the same weight. Remember that weight doesn't mean warmth, but layers do.

Keep It Dry. Clothing must be kept dry from the outside. Keep snow from collecting on outer clothing. Body heat can melt snow, thus forming moisture that may penetrate through the fabric.

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The feet are the hardest part of the body to keep warm and dry. Wear socks in graduated sizes. Do not wear sock combinations that restrict the blood circulation. When children wear the shoe and boot combination, remember that the cold comes up from the bottom of the boot. Therefore, some type of insulation should be inserted in the boot to form an inner sole. This will form a "cold barrier" between the sole of the shoe and the bottom of the boot. The inner sole can be made of felt or pieces of cardboard.

One type of outer trouser which is considered ideal for children is the snow suit. These trousers have a knit cuff around the ankles which can be pulled down over the boot to prevent snow from entering the foot gear.

Ideal coats for children and adults consists of a wind proof shell with a pile or quilted liner and an attached hood. Two things to keep in mind: valuable body heat will escape from a bare head and danger of frostbitten ears is increased. These problems are eliminated by the hood. The head should be covered at all times in extreme cold weather.



Frustrations that bring tears to the child and gray hairs to mothers and teachers are: 1. Zippers that won't zip, 2. Overshoes that are too tight, 3. Lost buttons, 4. Lost mittens, 5. Pockets that aren't there, 6. Suspenders that won't suspend, 7. Broken garters, 8. And too little clothing.

A good mother sees to it that winter clothing is kept mended and that all buttons, fasteners and zippers operate easily. A long cord extending from one mitten to the other through the sleeves and across the shoulders of the jacket or top of coat will keep mittens from getting lost. A large pocket sewed to the lining of the child's jacket will hold a report card, school notices, and lunch money safely. Clutched in a bulky mittened hand they may be lost.

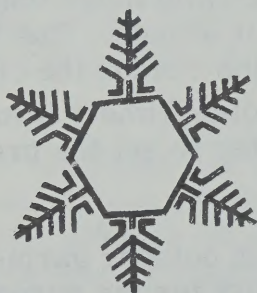
According to a mother with a good deal of experience in arctic cold weather, purchasing a snowsuit large enough to last the child more than one season may not be as wise as it sounds. The too long pants and the jacket may be the reason the child fights against wearing it or going without it may have serious results. It may be better to get the proper size in a less expensive suit.

Points to look for in outdoor garments are material, design, suitability for the purpose, and of course cost. Materials for outdoor garments follow the design for home insulation. The theory is to trap air in dead air space between layers of fabric. There are two ways to achieve this. There is fur, synthetic fiber insulation, fluffy wool or a down fill that is stitched between two layers of fabric; the other is to keep the body warm with layers of warm clothing such as two shirts, two sweaters, two pair of socks, and so on.

To the active child a two-piece snowsuit is more comfortable than a one-piece. A bib-style trouser gives an extra layer of warmth over the chest and stays on well. You want porous, absorbent, non-shrinkable, mothproof and hand washable material. It should be cut to fit comfortably and to close snugly at all openings, but it should still allow the child to move.

A suitable garment for a child is one that he can help himself into and out of. It is also wise to appeal to a child's taste in color and design. Your youngster would find it most uncomfortable to wear something not acceptable to his age group.

As to cost, the best you can afford is understandable. Fur is desirable but not necessary. Fluffy dacron, wool, or quilted down-filled coats are good insulators and less expensive. Generous hems and seam allowances with triple stitching will add to the wearing qualities of any kind of topcoat or parka.



Thrift Suggestions:

1. When clothing is outgrown, exchange with the neighbors for a garment of equal quality outgrown in their family.
2. Hand-me-downs are common in large families. Make over or add a touch of new trimming to help take the curse off an old garment.
3. Try your hand with fur sewing. Make over old fur trims such as collars and cuffs into a child's mittens or a muff. Let's not forget other make-overs: mittens from socks, refooting socks, hoods from sweaters, house slippers from felt hats or old coating.

4. Read and follow the directions for care and washing or cleaning.
5. Use moisture repellent coveralls to protect good wool suit.
6. Interline snowsuits with old sweaters or with flannel to extend their wear and to gain warmth as well.
7. Timesavers are: the press-on patch, patented fasteners, replacing worn elastic, and new zippers that run smoothly.
8. Lastly, teach a child to take care of his clothes; hang them up, dry them properly, and change them frequently.



CHILBLAINS AND FROSTBITE--

Chilblains are an inflammation of the skin as a result of exposure to extreme cold followed by the rapid change to high temperature. The symptoms vary according to the severity of the case. In mild cases the symptoms are a tingling and a slight itch and the part feels cold and clammy to the touch. In advanced stages there is congestion and swelling with heat present. The condition may subside or be present for months. Once affected the part remains weakened and is easily disturbed by even the slightest exposure to cold.

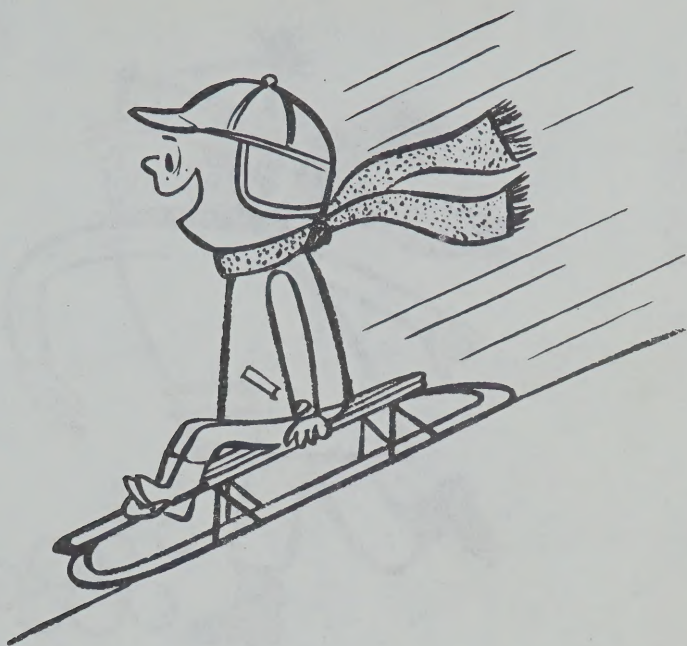
Frostbite can lead to amputation, or it can be very painful for a long period and leave the child hypersensitive to cold for the rest of his life. It is an ever-present danger when temperatures are below zero. It can sneak up and grab you before you realize it.

The first sign of frostbite is a prickly feeling and a numbness. The affected part will turn white or gray and later red. In some ways the damage is similar to a burn.

First degree frostbite, like sunburn, is an injury to the surface skin. It is likely to attack ears, toes, fingers, cheeks or nose.

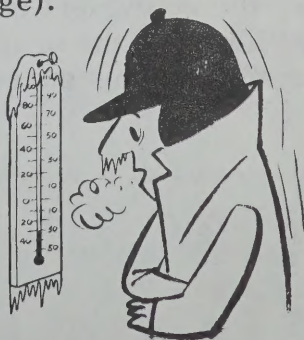
Second degree frostbite, like third degree burns, damages deeply and much of the frozen part may be lost.

First aid possibilities are limited. Control of the severe pain may be required, sometimes antibiotics and tetanus shots may be needed if the skin is broken. Thawing of the tissue as soon as possible is



a major consideration. Immediate treatment - re-warming. Immerse the frozen part in warm water, 42 degrees Centigrade or 108 degrees Fahrenheit but not warmer. After part returns to normal temperature, discontinue heat. Avoid trauma. Keep in bed. Rest and elevate affected parts.

The part should be uncovered at room temperature. If needed, give gentle progressive care or physical therapy to promote circulation to affected part (movement and gentle massage).





To use the chart, find the estimated or actual wind speed in the left-hand column and the actual temperature in degrees F. in the top row. The equivalent temperature is found where these two intersect. The description below the columns indicates the danger of frostbite to exposed flesh. For example, with a wind speed of 10 mph and a temperature of -10° F, the equivalent temperature is -33° F. This lies within the zone of increasing danger of frostbite, and protective measures should be taken.



Cooling Power of Wind on Exposed Flesh Expressed as an Equivalent Temperature (under calm conditions)



Estimated wind speed (in mph)	Actual Thermometer reading (° F.)												
	50	40	30	20	10	0	-10	-20	-30	-40	-50	-60	
EQUIVALENT TEMPERATURE (° F.)													
calm	50	40	30	20	10	0	-10	-20	-30	-40	-50	-60	
5	48	87	27	16	6	-5	-15	-26	-36	-47	-57	-68	
10	40	28	16	4	-9	-21	-33	-46	-58	-70	-83	-95	
15	36	22	9	-5	-18	-36	-45	-58	-72	-85	-99	-112	
20	32	18	4	-10	-25	-39	-53	-67	-82	-96	-110	-124	
25	50	16	0	-15	-29	-44	-59	-74	-88	-104	-118	-133	
30	28	13	-2	-18	-33	-48	-63	-79	-94	-109	-125	-140	
35	27	11	-4	-20	-35	-49	-67	-82	-98	-118	-129	-145	
40	26	10	-6	-21	-37	-53	-69	-85	-100	-116	-132	-148	
(wind speeds greater than 40 mph have little additional effect.)	LITTLE DANGER (for properly clothed person)			INCREASING DANGER					GREAT DANGER				
	Danger from freezing of exposed flesh												



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PREVENTION IS THE BEST PROTECTION

This means being properly dressed in warm clothing with waterproof shoes and dry socks and good covering for the head and ears. Keep clothing dry from both perspiration and outside moisture. Avoid tight clothing that may restrict circulation.

When traveling in sub-zero temperatures, be sure to take enough heavy clothing and shoes along for everyone in case there is a breakdown and you have to wait or hike for help. Sleeping bags are good emergency gear to carry with you.



SAFETY FEATURES - COLOR

A child's out-door clothing should show up against the background in which he is playing. Good attention-attracting colors are bright blue, bright green, red-purple, orange-red or yellow.



REFLECTIVE TAPE

Cold weather time is also the darkest time in Alaska. Reflective tape stitched to the back and/or shoulders of the school parka or coat can readily be seen by motorists. It is available at fabric shops or general merchandising stores and is easy to apply. It may save your child.